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grammatical principles stop short at the end of the junior year. But if a student who has just finished the work of the Junior year, during the interval between the first and second years of his seminary course, will set himself to read carefully and critically one of the Books of Samuel, or of Kings, and will in this study make out with exactness the place of each verbal form, at the same time making his own, so far as possible, the vocabulary of the book, in how much better condition he will be to do satisfactorily the higher and more important work of the Middle year. Is this not a thing to be done by every man who desires to make the most of himself in this department of study? Is it not a course to be urged by professors of Hebrew upon their students?

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

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1. At what (approximate) date did the use of *final* forms of letters, viz., Kāph, Mêm, Nûn, etc. begin to obtain with writers of Hebrew?

The final letters כ, ם, ן, ף, ץ seem to have been in use among the Jews ever since they changed their old original alphabet for כתב אשורי, "the Assyrian alphabet." The oldest Hebrew MSS. have these final letters; so have the oldest inscriptions upon gravestones,—and gravestones have been found in the Crimea whose inscriptions, if they are genuine, date back to the first Christian century. The Talmud also knows the peculiar final letters, and says that they were originated by the prophets. See Sabbath fol. 104a מנצפ"ך צפים אמרו.

2. When were the final letters first used to express numeral signs above four hundred?

As numeral signs the final letters appear mostly, if not exclusively, in the Masorah. I do not call to memory any instance from Talmudic, Midrashic, or late Rabbinic literature, in which the final letters are used to indicate numbers above four hundred. As an example of the Massoretic use of the final letters there may be cited the note at the end of Genesis, where it is stated that the book of Genesis contains 1534 verses, א"ך ל"ד סימן; as also the note at the end of Leviticus, where the number of verses is given as 849, נט"ף.

3. Would their numerical value be regarded as the same as that of the usual form in "Gematria," or the Rabbinical method of giving the "number" of a word?

In almost all statements, Massoretic statements excepted, the final letters have the same numerical values as the usual corresponding forms, e. g., in chronograms, on the title pages of Hebrew books, etc., in Gematriyaoth, and similar methods by which the "number" of a word is given. It is possible that a few exceptions from this rule may be found, but they will be few.

[For the answers to these questions we are indebted to Dr. B. Felsenthal, Chicago].